

A Chance to Serve Act

Congressman Andy Kim (NJ-03)

Service provides Americans the opportunity to interact with others across lines of race, class, region, and ideology. During moments of crisis, national service programs such as the Civilian Conservation Corps, Peace Corps, and AmeriCorps VISTA recruited Americans to serve. Congressman Andy Kim (NJ-03) is proud to introduce legislation to supercharge national service by creating more opportunities to serve and improving benefits for volunteers during and after their service.

A Chance to Serve Act includes the following provisions:

- Increases AmeriCorps funding to expand the number of positions from 250,000 to 500,000. In 2019, 500,000 Americans applied to serve in AmeriCorps, but due to a lack of available positions, only half were accepted.
- Increases the AmeriCorps living allowance, tying it to 200% of the federal poverty level (FPL), and exempts it from federal income taxes.
- Doubles the Segal AmeriCorps Education Award provided to AmeriCorps volunteers and exempts it from federal income tax. Under this plan, a full-time volunteer would receive nearly \$13,000, which could be used to pay current educational expenses or repay qualified student loans.
- Expands healthcare benefits for AmeriCorps volunteers and Returned Peace Corps Volunteers. After completing their service, Returned Peace Corps Volunteers would be eligible to receive hospital and medical care through a local VA health facility for one year. AmeriCorps volunteers would be allowed to remain enrolled in the AmeriCorps VISTA Health Benefit Plan at no cost for one year after their service. This is a period of transition when many volunteers are currently without healthcare coverage.
- Extends Non-Competitive Eligibility (NCE) status awarded to AmeriCorps and Returned Peace Corps Volunteers after completing their service from one year to three years. This extension will allow volunteers greater flexibility to consider a long-term career in government service and help the federal government maximize recruitment from this highly-qualified talent pool.
- Exempts the Readjustment Allowance for Returned Peace Corps Volunteers after the completion of their service from federal income taxes.
- Ensures Peace Corps Volunteers receive their monthly stipends on a consistent schedule throughout their service, including in the event of a government shutdown.